25 YEARS
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Pretty Salma: A Little Red Riding Hood Story from Africa (review)

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than the reader age-mates the title suggests), but the majority of the pieces are thought-provoking recollections, several with eloquently interspersed untranslated Spanish. Some of the shorter essays could translate into effective monologues for a high-school speech team, and the wide variety of childhood memories may appeal to older teens ready to settle in for a more reflective read. Contributor biographies are included. KB

Crilley, Mark *Miki Falls Book One: Spring;* written and illus. by Mark Crilley. HarperTeen, 2007 165p
Paper ed. ISBN 0-06-084616-X $7.99 R Gr. 7-9

In this manga-influenced graphic novel, Miki is beginning her senior year in high school, and she is desperate for something new in her life. A stand-offish (and gorgeous) new student, Hiro, presents a challenge for Miki, but she is determined not only to befriend him but also to uncover the reasons for his constant spying on people. After doing some spying herself, Miki learns that Hiro is a Deliverer, one of few chosen to control the limited flow of love in the world; by accepting this fate, Hiro became a non-human, sacrificing his own normal life to serve this role. After learning this secret, Miki should have had her memory erased, but her stubbornness is such that even powerful magic cannot deter her. Rather than being angry, Hiro seems relieved to have a friend who knows his secret, and the first novel in the series ends quietly, with the two pursuing their bond. A seven-page introduction before the title page seems to set up the main climax of the whole series, which makes for a slightly confusing start for this particular outing. However, as with his middle-grade Akiko series, Crilley's gripping and well-written plot and intriguing characters will easily lure readers back to see the series through. The black-and-white illustrations, softened with crosshatching and smoky grayshading, augment the text effectively: the art reflects the humor and emotional depth in Miko's story that is occasionally missing in her fact-heavy past-tense narration. Romance readers will appreciate the elegant and well-developed magical twist to the typical boy-meets-girl story: a boy who has forsworn his own love so that he may manage it for others, and the girl who is determined to find a loophole around this vow while not risking the balance of love in the world. AS

Daly, Niki *Pretty Salma: A Little Red Riding Hood Story from Africa;* ad. and illus. by Niki Daly. Clarion, 2007 29p
ISBN 0-618-72345-5 $16.00 R 5-8 yrs

In this retelling of "Little Red Riding Hood" set in Ghana, young Salma takes a shortcut home from the market through the "wild side of town." Here she meets Mr. Dog, who tricks her into handing over not only her purchases but also items of dress, and then sends her off ("Now run away, little girl, before I bite you in two!"). Salma dashes to her grandfather, who is telling stories to a group of children in the town center; in the meantime, the dog, disguised as Salma, goes to visit Granny. Grandfather and Salma, dressed in dramatic costumes gleaned from Grandfather's storytelling, arrive just in time; thinking he is witnessing Ka Ka Motobi the Bogeyman, the dog runs off in fear, and Granny is freed from the cookpot in which she was trapped. Daly's retelling offers a pleasing blend of familiar and original elements (there is no note, so other sources and influences are unknown); he is particularly adept at creating the Ghanaian setting, from the bustling market to the seedy wild side of the town. The story sparkles with kid-friendly humor, from the lanky male

dog's disguising himself as a little girl to the hilarious series of interactions between Granny and the fake Salma (Mr. Dog greets her with a big sloppy kiss, chases after a rooster at the suggestion of eating, and happily allows Granny to give him a shampooing and rubdown). The illustrations recall storyboards, with several scenes following one after another on each spread; composed of watercolor and digital media, they possess a somewhat muted vibrancy, with the brightness softened by pencil shadings and plentiful pale earthtones. This is an LRRH version that beams with sassy good fun, and it would make a terrific partner to James Marshall's *Red Riding Hood* (BCCB 9/87). HM

DAVIS, DEBORAH *Not Like You.* Clarion, 2007 [272p]
ISBN 0-618-72093-6 $16.00
Reviewed from galleys R Gr. 9-12

Yet another move is no surprise to fifteen-year-old Kayla, who's accustomed to being dragged along whenever her alcoholic mother takes a fancy to a new destination or a new man. This time they're in small-town New Mexico, where Kayla's mother has been given cheap rent in a mobile home, and where Kayla, as usual, finds work that will serve as the family's economic mainstay. On one of her dog-walking jobs, she finds Remy, a sexy twenty-four-year-old musician (she tells him she's almost eighteen) who makes her feel important, wanted, and valued in a way that her home life never has. This is a strongly written portrait of a sympathetic young woman who isn't quite as matured by her life as she thinks. Characterization is acute throughout: the picture of Kayla's mother, who tries to be better but fails so repeatedly that Kayla would be a fool to trust her, and who breezily helps herself to her daughter's income, is sharp but not cruel, and Remy isn't an evil charlatan but a self-indulgent dreamer a little too eager to take what's offered to him. It's also absolutely believable that Kayla would yearn for escape from such a situation, even to the point of deceiving herself about her own behavior; what she deserves, though, is real possibility rather than an impulsive flight of fancy, and readers will be glad to see her heading toward a better future at the end. DS

DAY, KAREN *Tall Tales.* Lamb, 2007 229p
Library ed. ISBN 0-375-93773-0 $18.99
Trade ed. ISBN 0-375-83773-6 $15.99 R Gr. 5-7

Before Meg's family moved, her father promised that he'd stop drinking. Now twelve-year-old Meg is stuck in a new school and she's finally making a friend in sweet and popular Grace Bennett, but she's got the same old father, angry, violent, and alcoholic. To save her pride and to abide by her mother's wish that their problems stay family business, Meg invents tales about her family and history that explain their repeated moves, her unwillingness to let people into the house, and, as things deteriorate, her mother's bruises and her brother's broken arm. The story's elements are predictable in the extreme, but such dysfunctional situations do tend to follow familiar patterns, and the story's messages are blessedly subtle rather than heavy-handed. There's some real creativity in the characters, especially Grace, who just wants people to get along, and her family; Day also gives full credit to the complexity of Meg's emotions, making her father's eventual departure a genuinely sad scene despite the necessity of the action. Just about every kid can relate to the desire to cover up family flaws, so they'll understand Meg's dilemma and they'll be glad to see her reach better times. DS